

UGC stands studies report by its Russian

The University Grants Committee (UGC) has defended its report on Russian and Soviet studies in British Universities and placed the initiative for further action firmly in the hands of the universities.

Speaking at the annual conference of the British Universities Association of Slavists in Durham Professor R. A. C. Atkinson, chairman of the UGC sub-committee on Russian and Soviet Studies, said that the ball now lay in the hands of the universities.

"If you yourselves can formulate a programme of rationalization which will ensure the preservation of exceptional scholarship I hope very much that you will do so and I can assure you that the UGC will do its utmost to support you in this," he said.

Invoking the spectre of government interference Professor Atkinson warned that if the recommendations of the report were not accepted and no alternative means found of reducing the current provisions, the risk of intervention from outside the university system would be great.

He said: "It is surely better that a problem of this kind should be solved by agreement within the university system rather than that it should be ignored by those most directly affected and that its solutions should be left to be imposed by our legislators who are far less well informed than we are about our own universities."

Lecturers' new pay claim

College and polytechnic lecturers have lodged a new pay claim, in line with the movement of prices in the year up to April, 1980. Inflation is now running at nearly 20 per cent a year.

The claim was officially lodged by the teachers' side of the Durham further education committee on Monday. The pay cycle has been thrown out of sequence by the Clegg investigation into pay comparisons which formed part of the 1979 settlement.

The two sides are due to meet later in April, by which time they hope Professor Hugh Clegg's report will have been published.

A spokesman for the Clegg Commission confirmed that the report would be sent to the Prime Minister on schedule, either today or Monday. The publication date may be announced next week.

But it is unlikely the report will be published by April 15, as announced by the UGC. The commission's report will be published in the middle of the year.

During the investigation, the UGC has not been publishing its annual index in the month. The index is now being published in the month of April.

The index shows that the average salaries in the higher education sector have risen by 17.5 per cent since April 1979.

NELP wins a reprieve from department closure plan

by David Jobbins

Threatened departments and courses at North East London Polytechnic have been granted a reprieve—but it may prove only to be temporary.

Polytechnic governors have decided neither to accept nor reject the controversial plan for dismantling the humanities and environmental studies faculties, and discontinuing a wide range of courses.

Instead they have set up a working party which will examine the plan—and the alternative scheme drawn up by the polytechnic's academic board which is designed to avoid compulsory redundancies and retain the threatened courses.

The working party will have 10 members and is chaired by the chairman of governors, Councillor Arthur Edwards. Its three governing members will be selected by Councillor Edwards; the three academic members will be selected by the polytechnic's academic board.

It will report to the existing working party set up by the governors' policy and resources committee. Its report will also be sent to the academic board and other

interested parties "for consideration". Finally it will be considered by the governors.

"This new development plan has been agreed by the constituent authorities," a polytechnic spokesman said. "The plan is a compromise between the governors' decision as a limited victory."

Mr Tim Butler, chairman of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, said: "However unacceptable the outcome of the meeting, it represents a victory for the unions in that the director and the chairmen of governors were forced to withdraw their proposals in favour of this unsatisfactory compromise."

But the fight for education and staff jobs continues. Mr Bill Smith, chairman of the campus unions liaison committee, said the decision would not be left to the committee of ten.

"We shall spread our ideas much wider than the working party reports which have been specifically referred to it."

No timetable has been established for the working party to produce the new plan—and a first aim will be to establish a working party to be held.

One fear shared by NATFHE and other campus unions is that the new committee will mirror very closely the group which drew up the original proposal.

Governors have agreed to tell the joint education committee, which meets today to approve the polytechnic's 1980-81 estimates, that the cuts are currently envisaged—now £3.7m cannot be made without a substantial reduction in staff and teaching work.

They are asking the JEC not to make the cuts—but if they are to define precisely the conditions under which staff are made redundant.

Today the JEC is expected to agree to phase the cut over two years—with £1.5m savings in 1980-81 and the balance the following financial year.

Governors say that the cuts for 1980-81 should be made by trimming back on supplies and services, and by disestablishing 40 vacant posts and 52.5 non-teaching ones.

Because of the high turnover rate they hope that job reductions for non-teaching staff can be achieved by natural wastage, and have agreed to authorize a "no redundancy" understanding at management level with the white collar administrative unions.

Transfer service plan rebuffed

by Ngolo Creque

Proposals to set up a national education service on credit transfer have been rebuffed by the universities. They have decided against endorsing plans for a pilot scheme.

Their stand will be a serious blow for the advocates of the scheme, intended to ease transfer between different educational institutions by also out of step with the large number of organizations which are wary of the scheme.

At the end of last year a sub-committee of the Department of Education and Science reported that there was a clear need for a national service and that it was feasible to set up. The Government said it would be prepared to consider funding a pilot scheme providing there was sufficient support and that charging for the service would be acceptable.

Since then the study group headed by Mr Peter Toyn, Exeter University, has been working on the proposal. The group has been asked to consider funding a pilot scheme providing there was sufficient support and that charging for the service would be acceptable.

All the universities have been canvassed individually by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. They have told the DES that there is only limited support for the scheme and that they cannot

endorse implementation in the proposed form. They have put forward two reasons for their objection. The first is that a university already has established arrangements for obtaining information about the qualifications of students who wish to transfer to another university.

The second reason is that the DES is not doing enough to encourage universities to transfer students. The DES is not doing enough to encourage universities to transfer students.

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New status demanded for polys

by Paul Malher

Polytechnic directors and chairmen of polytechnic boards of governors have joined forces for the first time behind demands for a "nationally coordinated" system of funding and for corporate status for the polytechnics.

Corporate status would turn polytechnics into independent legal entities, allow them to register as companies and handle their own accounts. They would still be bound by the regulations that accompany public law.

The move, described as a watershed in the history of the polytechnics, came at a consultation meeting organized by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics last week.

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Dr Robert Clendinning, chairman of the governors of Brunel Polytechnic said he favoured national funding based on need and the provision of courses.

"The present system of capping the pool has all the disadvantages of central funding with none of the advantages of a national body. We ought perhaps to have a new body like the University Grants Committee for polytechnics."

Chairman of governors attending the meeting are now seeking support for their views on funding and corporate status from their individual boards.

Mr Norman Lloyd, director of Hatfield Polytechnic, is against the idea of charters, but he supported a campaign to seek corporate status. "Local authorities exist to serve the community," he said.

The meeting also resolved that local ties between L.O.s and the polytechnics should be strengthened by a "more constructive partnership". This would follow the setting up of a national funding body which would remove competition at the local level for scarce resources.

Dr Arthur Suddaby, provost of the City of London Polytechnic, said the political significance of the meeting was considerable. "For the first time directors have ironed out most of their own differences and now support from local authority representatives."

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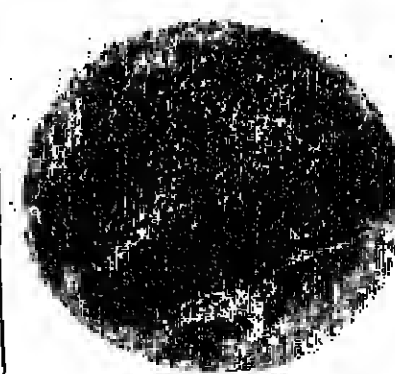
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Government names Merrison's men

The Government this week announced the appointment of a seven-man working party to investigate the funding of higher education.

The working party, headed by Sir Alec Merrison, vice-chancellor of Brunel University, will also include Sir John Ginn, professor of law at the University of Cambridge, and Sir Rex Richards, vice-chancellor of DePaul University.

The brief is to "review the current arrangements for the support of university research in the natural and social sciences to consider how for these arrangements make for the most effective use of existing and likely future resources; and to report to the Advisory Board for the Research Councils and the University Grants Committee."

The remainder of the working party comprises Sir Edward Parkes (chairman of the UGC), Sir Geoffrey Alton (chairman of the Science Research Council), Professor Peter Brimley (professor of law at Manchester University), Professor John Ginn (professor of natural philosophy at Glasgow University), Dr Martin Halpern (director-general of research for the Department of Transport and the Environment), and Sir Rex Richards (vice-chancellor of DePaul University).

It is hoped that the first meeting will take place before the end of the month.

The Government's decision to set up the working party comes at a time when the Government is considering a major restructuring of the higher education system.

The working party will be asked to report to the Advisory Board for the Research Councils and the University Grants Committee by the end of the year.

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Public sector faces 11 per cent spending fall

Spending on higher education in the public sector is expected to fall by 11 per cent in the next five years, the Government has announced.

The White Paper predicted a "small reduction" in spending on higher education, especially in the public sector. But it is also clear that the Government is determined to reduce the public sector's share of higher education expenditure.

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Huddersfield and council on collision course

by Paul Flathe

Kirklees Council is now waiting for the completion of a second audit on the affairs of Huddersfield Polytechnic before deciding what action to take, following allegations of maladministration at the college over the past 12 months.

But a row is almost certain to follow the senior polytechnic staff revealed that they would not be sending the answers to a questionnaire from the authority by this week's deadline of March 26.

The questionnaire asked for details on staffing levels, expenditure, and the results of the polytechnic's departments, student-aid ratios, and financial arrangements.

Mr Peter Fielden, manager of academic support services at the polytechnic, said: "There is no possibility of doing it in time because of the work programme in which the governors have embarked as a regular two-item audit report."

"It is not a question of refusing to comply. But there is an order of priorities to these things. The questionnaire was completed last November and covered the previous year's administration."

It was requested after Kirklees councillors expressed unease at the degree of accountability of polytechnic finances. The second audit would bring the accounts up to date, but it will also fill in details of the polytechnic's performance.

Meanwhile the Secretary of State for Education, Mr Kenneth Clarke, has written to Kirklees urging the council to resolve the situation at local level. He had been asked by the

authority for permission to intervene directly in the polytechnic's affairs. This has always been strongly resisted by this polytechnic board of governors.

"At the moment we are trying to comply with the wishes of the council. We are now holding joint meetings with representatives of the polytechnic," said a council spokesman.

The council's representatives on the committee, described as very "high-powered", include the Conservative leader of the council, Mr Tom Cliffe, a deputy-leader, the leader and deputy-leader of the Labour group, and the leader of the Liberal group.

The rector Mr Ken Durraids is in hospital and has not attended the joint meetings for that reason. The polytechnic is adamant that the rector has gone ahead without prejudice to the governing council.

But the rector should not be excluded from the talks as councillors have demanded.

Councillor Tom Cliffe refused to make any comment on the polytechnic's failure to hand back the answers to the questionnaire. "Until I hear of this from official channels I cannot say anything. We are trying to resolve the situation."

A further joint meeting of polytechnic governors and councillors is planned for next month, and the council's financial subcommittee will meet shortly to discuss the affair.

Meanwhile West Yorkshire Police are conducting their inquiries into the affairs of Leeds Polytechnic.

Overseas fees policy

Look again at it," he said. The distribution by country of overseas students was a matter for the Foreign Office, he said, and not the DES, so the possibility of a reduction of the numbers coming from the poorest countries was not something he was considering. An announcement on special measures for BGC students was expected before the Easter recess.

Mr Charles said the new policy was expected to save £90m, which would be used to fund a "future" population of 65,000 overseas students—the number anticipated for 1981-82.

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The Expenditure White Paper—how it affects higher education

Unrest on campuses, Nine per cent cut over five years

by Paul Flather

The National Union of Students is predicting a "hot summer" of unrest and strikes on those campuses where residence fees have been raised well in excess of next year's 14.7 per cent increase in student grants.

Mr Trevor Phillips, NUS president, said: "If the Government wants to play dirty with us, we can only play rough with them."

The NUS had expected the grant to at least match the government's own estimate of a 19.7 per cent rise in inflation, and also go some way to make up the grant shortfall on last year's rate of inflation. It had submitted a claim for 36 per cent.

The maximum rates for undergraduates living away from home in London will rise from £1,485 to £1,635; for those living away from home outside London from £1,245 to £1,430; and for those living at home from £985 to £1,125. Supplementary grants will also be increased, and the minimum maintenance grant received by all students will rise from £335 to £385.

About 10,000 parents will also be relieved of having to make any contributions towards grants because the starting point for the residual income will be raised from £4,700 to £5,800.

Mr Mark Carlisle, Education Secretary, said the five per cent short fall between the new grant level and the rate of inflation marked a contribution to the Government's policy of restraining public expenditure.

The NUS is now preparing to mount a campaign against high residence fees, which they predict will rise by at least 23 per cent in the next year.

A survey published by the NUS earlier this year revealed that some colleges, including the North Worcester College and Stockwell College, Kent—were charging more than 25 per cent above the grant element for weekly board and lodging.

Mr Geoffrey Coston, secretary general of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, said this week: "We are dismayed that the increase in student grants is not sufficient to cover increases in the economic cost to universities of providing board and lodging for their students."

by Ngau Crequier

Predicted savings on full cost fees for overseas students and on school meals and milk will allow the Government to cut back on education, the White Paper showed.

Expenditure on education will fall from about £8.8 billion in 1978-79 to about £8.5 billion in 1980-81 in 1983-84—a reduction of about 9 per cent over five years.

Adult education will be badly hit with a reduction in spending by about one third—£15m in a full year. The Government hopes this will be met by increased fees and that enrolments will not show a substantial fall.

The science budget does relatively better than most in the long term. Although spending will be reduced for the next two years, from £308m in 1979-80, to £302m in 1980-81 and

£300m in 1981-82 it will then go up to £310m for the next two years.

The Government is assuming that the total number of home students in higher and further education will remain broadly constant, although there might be a small drop in admissions because of the following through effect of post intakes.

It expects "big savings" because of the decision to charge overseas students full fees. The hursery scheme for postgraduate overseas students of outstanding merit will cost about £1m in 1980-81 rising to £4m by 1983-84.

Recurrent spending on higher and further education will fall from £1,755m (at last year's prices) in 1980-81, to £1,710m in 1981-82, to £1,690m in 1982-83 and to £1,670m in 1983-84. Capital spending will go from £253m in 1980-81 to £160m in 1981-82 and then £150m in the

next two years.

Student awards will go up by nearly 15 per cent next year to £670m. Then up to £650m for the following two years and £660m in 1983-84.

The White Paper says that with the increased provision for home students in non-advanced further education, enrolments are projected to increase by about 10 per cent by 1983-84, in recognition of the need to improve the supply of trained manpower for industry and commerce.

A building programme will allow for the provision of extra places as well as some essential adaptations.

There will also be an extension of schemes for the training of teachers in shortage subjects, like mathematics and science. In-service training will be maintained at its present

level. Youth service spending will be held at the planned 1980-81 level of about £60m up to 1983-84.

Spending on primary and secondary schools is expected to fall 6 per cent between 1978-79 and 1983-84 although the fall to £1,680m will be about 13 per cent.

The Government hopes to cut £280m on meals, milk and transport in the same period. It says this figure was reached before the Lords' revolt on transport and local education authorities will have to wait for the next public expenditure survey to know what the implications of this will be.

Teacher numbers are expected to fall from 471,000 in 1978-79 to 412,000 in 1983-84. By the next year, current expenditure on under-fives is expected to fall by about 5 per cent.

Leather, page 2

when the numbers of overseas students' admissions will be available.

The universities will know their share of the £32m extra grant for this year in the next couple of weeks but they will not know the details of next year's grant until May or, more probably, June.

But they have cause to be concerned on a number of fronts. There are a number of pay claims still with the Clegg Commission and there can only be speculation about what figures will finally emerge.

Everything will depend on what happens to overseas student numbers.

Mr Geoffrey Coston, secretary general of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, said: "The announcement of a 14 per cent rise in the grant for overseas students is a relief, but it does not solve the problem of the Government's policy on overseas students, and the strong possibility that allowance for pay and price rises may prove to be unrealistic."

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to be the shrillness of our tone. We were also criticized by others for our docility and the fact that nobody heard us at all. My own feeling is that in these days I would rather we were erring on the side of noisiness. People used to hear the sound of their own voice in the general din."

He said that the committee's relationship with the University Grants Committee was an important one and it would be inconceivable if the latter formed a view on university matters without consulting the CVCP.

But it was also increasingly important that the CVCP should have direct contact with ministers and civil servants, especially as there were signs that government was less receptive now to confidential advice.

"Ministers may be more inclined on occasion to listen to advice which is given publicly and may therefore carry some political clout. So universities must have a representative public voice which can, as it were, speak out loud to ministers in counterpoint to the whispers in their other ear from the UGC, which is a rather representative voice."

He said a current difficulty was that the CVCP recognized the need to face more boldly the prospect of inter-institutional arrangements designed to promote rationalisation, realising this might lead to merger or closure.

But how do we see the actual mechanics of this? Do we leave it to the UGC as in the case of the recent Russian report? Do we do it ourselves, as London is proposing to do? Should there be a role for the CVCP as an embodiment of the self-governing university system, somewhere between the UGC and individual universities?

"A number of people are beginning to say that there should, but I must confess to a good deal of worry in going down a road which would necessarily take us into questions which are very divisive between universities, and away from those areas in which we have interests in common."

He said the universities had more difficulty than many other social institutions in pronouncing themselves because there was no mass system of higher education. Cultivation of the "old boy network" was something not altogether to be disparaged but the old types of cosy Athenaeum consensus between top people were not as powerful as they used to be. The universities needed to reach out to a wider public.

Promotion was best done by a university in its own locality or region. He said he thought there was a great deal in the argument that the lack of involvement in local processes of government and politics by universities may be becoming a source of weakness rather than strength.

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'Fewer teachers' pointer for Scots

by Olga Wojtas

Scottish universities are covered directly by the Government's White Paper, but plans for the rest of Scotland's higher education have not yet been spelled out.

However, the education, libraries and arts budget is being slashed from the 1979-80 figure of £945m to £860m in 1983-84.

This will be largely achieved, by a 10 per cent cut in the number of teachers. Scottish Secretary, Mr George Younger, has said local authorities employ 3,000 more teachers than set out in SRD guidelines and wants the total reduced by a further 4,500 within the next five years, although he says most of this will be achieved by natural wastage.

Even with this cut, said Mr Younger, the falling school rolls would mean an improved pupil-teacher ratio.

However, these figures have deep implications for the colleges of education. Mr Younger said it was doubtful that Scotland could continue to support 10 teacher training colleges.

Mr Pollock also asked whether Mr Alex Fletcher, Scottish Education Minister, knew of Mr Younger's figures. He understood that Mr Fletcher would be announcing his proposals on the future of teacher education in the next few days.

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£15m axe on adult education

by Charlotte Barry

The Government's decision to cut public spending on adult education by one third in the next year represents "shortsighted lunacy", the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education said this week.

The cut, which will amount to about £15m below the 1978-79 level from this September, is expected to be achieved by higher fees. The Government hopes that the present level of about two million students on evening and other courses will not be reduced.

NATFHE's assistant secretary for further education, Mr Mick Rixley, said: "It's very clear from the White Paper that the adult education service over the next few years will be decimated."

This latest blow to adult education comes while it is still reeling from the effects of large and disproportionate cuts to its provision last autumn.

NATFHE's concern about the latest reduction in spending on adult education was mirrored at a public meeting in London presided over by the national Save Adult Education Campaign, NATFHE and the Association for Adult and Continuing Education.

Describing the Government's "philistinism" in its attitude to adult education, Mr Rixley said: "The Government's policy of increasing expenditure on higher education makes it difficult to see how there is still increasing pressure from highly qualified young people. Nevertheless, we are encouraged that we have not been singled out for harsh treatment."

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Ministers seeking 'backdoor' change of policy

by David Jobbins

Ministers are trying to slip in a fundamental change in higher education policy by the back door, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education warned.

The 9 per cent cut was "very significant", when the numbers of students in higher education are rising, and the Government is trying to cut the number of students in higher education.

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Redundancy plan 'unnecessary'

by Ngau Crequier

A national redundancy scheme for university staff was neither necessary, timely or desirable, Mr Geoffrey Coston, secretary-general of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals, said last week.

Answering questions at the Conference of University Administrators at Reading University, Mr Coston said several universities had raised this point and some were strongly in favour.

Many universities genuinely felt that the degree of retrenchment did not justify compulsory redundancy of staff, he said. A national scheme would create all kinds of uncertainties, conditions or employment might be as expensive as anything else they would have to cope with.

He said that this could be outweighed if the Government told the universities they had to slim down and make money available to pay off all debt. But there is no concave question of the Government doing anything of the kind.

Slavists reject plans for Russian studies

by Olga Wojtas

The British Universities Association of Slavists has formally rejected a proposal by the University Grants Committee designed to rationalize Russian and Russian Studies.

Following last week's defence by the UGC of its controversial report, BUAS has overwhelmingly endorsed an Association of University Teachers' motion rejecting the report.

At the same time it urges the committee to sponsor a national conference on the future policy of modern languages.

Professor R. A. Peace, the retiring president of BUAS, said the proposals were a means of redressing the modern languages imbalance and of putting an end to the "unjustifiable domination of French" in secondary and tertiary education.

Confusion at Tories' conference after surprise election of 'anti-NUS' chairman

by Paul Fletcher

Conservative students' policy on the National Union of Students (NUS) in disarray following a confused conference in Loughborough last week.

The Federation of Conservative Students, which has 10,000 members, have passed a motion reaffirming as "fundamental" the strategy of involvement within a national students union.

But the same motion calls on the Federation to "reform NUS" and to "disaffiliatory pressure and political working from within", and calls on the FCS national committee to provide information for or against disaffiliation as requested.

The confusion in voting came in the wake of the surprise election of Mr Peter Young, an Aberdeen student, as the Chairman of FCS. He beat his closest rival Miss Anne Scourby by 127 votes to 118.

Division in the ranks over union affiliation

by Paul Fletcher

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OU students air their grievances

by Olga Wojtas

The unusual problems and issues faced by Britain's largest single student body were highlighted at the weekend when members of the Open University Students' Association (OUSA) met for their annual conference.

During two days of concentrated sessions at Nottingham University, the 450 delegates who came from as far apart as the Isle of Wight, Northern Ireland and Orkney, thrashed out their policy for the coming year.

Not surprisingly, much of the debate centred round the "black" of the grant and the Government cuts in education. In spite of doubts expressed about its effectiveness, the conference agreed overwhelmingly to continue its campaign for mandatory grants, fight the continuing threat to discretionary awards, and step up the programme of action against cuts in public spending.

In addition to the concern about the growing financial hardship faced by many Open University students, worry was expressed about possible rescheduling of BBC/OU programmes to inaccessible times, and the very real threat of cuts in the amount of face-to-face tuition and counselling support which supplements the written course materials.

Now
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I use this view, so that I can see the world as a natural reflection of the world which I have already spoken. I suspect that it can absorb more results than we can deliver. So far, for example, we cannot detect in the climatic record any remarkable aspects due to the fact that the climate has changed a little, but global climate hardly at all, unless we were grievously wrong in my World Climate Conference paper in 1979. The release of about one third of the original soil carbon, and the destruction of half the forests, in the Neolithic times were not plugged up into a climatic convulsion. Somehow the natural systems that we study have adapted to the changes, modulated them and masked them. They may well keep up the good-work, they might be capable of change present for the next half-century may outdo their versatility.

For the geographer the opportunity to analyse and predict this influence is a marvelous challenge. Humanity and nature exist in constant interaction. It might be a good idea to go to the point much longer and to think in terms of the impact of nature on society, or the reverse.

disintegrating has receded... It takes a unky rooted in natural logic.

Not for a second do I counsel less vigilance and action in our efforts to protect nature. In no way do I apologize for my own sin of inactivity or for the efforts to do so. I hope that the mood to conserve and to protect will ultimately triumph over mine. It is necessary to generate problems to achieve this objective, and even if it is, to do so it is not legitimate for the real scientist. If, therefore, I were to follow in Adlai Stevenson's footsteps, and find myself addressing the Royal Geographical Society, and RCOSSC, I would undoubtedly be his words, ending with these: that we depend for our health, comfort and happiness on the care, the work and the love we give our craft, and on its aesthetic splendour.

The author is professor of physics and geography at the University of Toronto, and provost of Trinity College, Toronto.

It is, to do so is not legitimate for the real ecologist. If, therefore, I were to follow in Adlai Stevenson's footsteps, and find myself addressing, not the Royal Geographical Society, but ECOSOC, I would probably echo his words, ending with these: that we depend for our health, comfort and happiness on the earth, and that the five we give up, will on its astonishing hardness.

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BOOKS

Practical and expressive social activity

Social Being: a theory for social psychology
by Rom Harré
Blackwell, £15.00 and £5.95
ISBN 0 631 10691 X and 12791 7

Social Being speaks on three grand topics: the nature of the person, the nature of society, and the method of social inquiry. What it says on the first subject is rather serendipitous and not very satisfying. What it says on the other two is more stimulating and serves as a useful summary of the views with which Harré has been associated since his authorship, with Paul Secord, of *The Explanation of Social Behaviour*.

Harré puts forward three major theses on the nature of persons: that they are autonomous, being capable of recognizing the influence of any motivational factor and of inhibiting or reinforcing it; that they are the immediate authors of their actions, causing them to occur in a manner that cannot be analysed as a case of their mental states' orienting the neurons; and that they are embedded in, in the sense that their mental states do not exist over and beyond their physical ones.

Harré's presentation and defence of each of these claims is unsatisfactory. The first thesis, contrary to his intention, does nothing to explicate autonomy since a notion of autonomy is slipped into the analysis itself. In monitoring the influences that motivate them people are depicted as free from further influences, at least in the

limit cases. Thus autonomy is bluntly assumed rather than being analysed and argued for. As for the second thesis, this is as obscure in Harré's hands as it is in those of its other defenders. When we say the engine is making a noise, we clearly mean that the rattling of its parts is doing so. When we say that a person is performing an action, why should we not just mean that his reading of his situation is giving rise to a behavioural response?

The third, physicalist thesis is also unsatisfactory because Harré relies for its defence on a sketchy presentation of a stock point of view: that which would represent mental states as functionally identified and capable of different sorts of physical realization. He ignores the difficulties that have been raised for this point of view, the amendments through which it has recently been put and the alternatives to it that have been developed.

In dealing with the nature of society Harré is on ground which he has done more to make his own. He defends a number of engaging claims. Social activity has two aspects: the practical, which is concerned with the achievement of regular goals, and the expressive, which is concerned with the presentation of the agent. Since the expressive aspect dominates over the practical in most societies, and since the goal of expression is to secure recognition and respect, "the pursuit of reputation in the eyes of others is the overriding preoccupation of human life". The pursuit of

reputation is primarily displayed in how agents act towards others, and how they account to others for their actions. In sustaining regular patterns of actions and accounting, people form groups but, while such entities may have "emergent properties", they are not causally independent of people. Social change is to be understood on an evolutionary-cum-dialectical model, but in such a way that individuals remain the ultimate determinants of whether a change is consolidated. The hope for radical social change turns on the possibility of creating new expressive practices, new dispensations of reputation, a possibility to be explored in small-scale social revolutions. The task of the reconstruction of society can be begun by anyone at any time in any face to face encounter.

Harré's discussion of these theses, and I do not have space to assess it properly here, varies considerably in quality. The claim about the predominance of the pursuit of reputation is largely convincing and is not defended at adequate length. The claim about the status of groups, while it seems to me to be reasonable, is barked by a discussion in which no proper definition is given of an emergent property and no explicit argument is offered to accept it. On the other hand, the background discussion to the claims about social change is richly informed and full of interest even if it fails to make either thesis irrefragable. On the method of social inquiry Harré has, as with "the nature of

society", distinctive and interesting things to say, though his defence of them is of variable quality. He claims that traditional methods of studying small-scale and large-scale social phenomena are inadequate, reflecting an inappropriate positivistic methodology. Large-scale phenomena are not directly observable to the social scientist and may be examined only in the effects that they have on the small-scale. The study of small-scale phenomena may take any of a number of forms, such as the analysis of episodes of action and accounting, or the investigation of individual biographies.

In any case it should be identifiable rather than unidentifiable, concentrating on the particular and the distinctive in the first instance, and only looking for generalities in the second. The aim of any social study is, as realism claims, to unearth the causal mechanism producing behaviour: this consists in the knowledge and motivation of the behaving agents. The discovery of such mechanism is facilitated by the construction of models, such as the problem-solving, or the dramatic, model of the social episode. The adequacy of any account in social science is guaranteed only by positive feedback: the fact that the people on whom it bears can be persuaded to accept it.

In his discussion of these claims Harré provides a useful summary of the criticisms of positivism in social science, but he does little to establish his denigration of the study of large-scale phenomena. His claim that social science should be ides-

graphic is one that I welcome, but he fails to tackle the question of how to study it. The question of how to study it is very simply stated. How can the social scientist represent the same social phenomena in a way that is both adequate and acceptable? And why should he think that the social scientist is in a position to do this? The question of how to study it is very simply stated. How can the social scientist represent the same social phenomena in a way that is both adequate and acceptable? And why should he think that the social scientist is in a position to do this?

Social Being is a mixed bag. It is a work that will be a useful source of suggestions for social psychologists in search of theory, but it is not the bible of any new orthodoxy. The term "emergent" appears sporadically in the text, but the approach taken by Harré but ethnogenics is as elusive as eye, as the emperor's new dress. There is no grand theory here, although there are a great many theoretical ideas. Still, this is a criticism, since social psychology has laboured so long on the diet of ideas, provided by behaviourism. Harré's interpretation of social psychology will surely prove a productive one.

Philip Pettit

Philip Pettit is professor of philosophy in the School of Interdisciplinary Human Studies at Bradford University.

The central significance of attitudes to race

Racial Prejudice, the Individual and Society
by Christopher Bagley and Gafendra K. Verma
Saxon House, £8.50
ISBN 0 566 00294 9

The historical connections of British society with the slave trade and the slave systems of the Caribbean and America, our journeys of adventure, religious missions and acquisition of an empire, our domestic racial movements and our attitudes towards race, are all subjects which have been treated in a number of ways. The authors of this book, however, have taken up the study of racial prejudice in a new way. They have taken up the study of racial prejudice in a new way. They have taken up the study of racial prejudice in a new way.

This crystallization of a contemporary "race relations" issue—like the emergence of the feminist movement—has dug deep into academic traditions and modes of work, sending historians, social scientists and others scrambling to catch up. The authors of this book, however, have taken up the study of racial prejudice in a new way. They have taken up the study of racial prejudice in a new way.

"new" question. The historians have done much good work piecing together the history of "the black presence" and Victorian attitudes to class and race; the sociologists have done some very good work on housing and employment patterns and the like; and the psychologists have taken up largely American methodologies for the study of prejudice.

Taken together, as attempts to appreciate the totality of the question, the present results seem exceedingly unsatisfactory. We have not achieved much in the way of the theoretical incorporation of the significance of race into the social or behavioural sciences. Nor, though not necessarily for the above reason—has much been achieved by way of social, political, historical or psychological analysis.

The social psychological approach, well represented by Bagley and Verma in this book, places its faith in the absolutely central significance of attitudes to race, and aspires to measure them, explain their genesis, their variation in strength and incidence, and their relationship to all the other social and psychological variables. It is an attitude specifically an attitude of racial significance. Do racially

discriminatory actions flow directly from racial attitudes? Are there not a whole series of attitudes, institutional arrangements and beliefs which are not overtly racial in character but which do have a profound effect on the lives of coloured immigrants in Britain? Do people really hold in their minds coherent, relatively permanent attitudes towards subjects, which can be measured and termed specific attitudes? Is this little nugget of a mind, really, really prejudiced attitudes? Really, really prejudiced attitudes? Really, really prejudiced attitudes?

They begin by saying that "the methods of study are... those of traditional social psychology, examining statistical correlates of previously validated scales, and interpreting these correlations by various types of multivariate analysis." This is a very traditional kind of study, the measurement of pre-

judice, its association with other attitudes, its relationship to differential contacts, to "age", education and social class, the way prejudice is evoked in different situations; the best literature on this subject, including an interesting discussion of Milgram's work on response to authority, is summarized and criticized very fully.

But even allowing for the fact that the authors repeatedly point to the limits of social psychological methods, serious contradictions remain. The book begins with a résumé of Parsons's schema of personality, culture and social system levels of analysis. Even if this were thought to hold promise, it is scarcely followed through, and later chapters find the authors tending to dismiss Parsons for his undue emphasis on "integration". An early passage scolds Marx for seeing "class" as determined "by the mode of production of material life" and later chapters find the authors tending to dismiss Parsons for his undue emphasis on "integration".

Robert M. Harris
University of California Press,
\$10.00
ISBN 0 520 03647 7

The venomous libels which accompanied the dismissal of Nacker in 1981 and the false statistics which his successor, Caloone, sought to discredit his achievements have been accepted uncritically by generations of historians. The cult of Turbot has cast a shadow over the Governor's career and it is only recently that a few writers have called for a re-examination of his role as a minister in the dying years of the social reforms.

Steven Fenton

Steven Fenton lectures in sociology at Bristol University.

BOOKS

Heroism and suffering

British Society and the French Wars 1793-1815
by Clive Emsley
Macmillan, £8.95 and £3.95
ISBN 0 333 240 219 and 240 227

The impact of war on society, and in particular the energizing effect of war as an agent of social transformation, are themes which have attracted the attention of a growing number of historians. Clive Emsley's purpose in this welcome new study is to provide a useful summary of the main developments in English society during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. He is not concerned with the narrative of political, military and naval events, but with a knowledge of the main course of the war is essential if the reader is to get the most out of his pages.

Broadly speaking Mr Emsley succeeds in his purpose. For the student his book will be of great value. It is clear, judiciously balanced, and free from exaggeration. It reveals the complexities of social development, without losing sight of the main issues. The author avoids the extremes of historical interpretation. He stoops neither to lurid invective nor to excessive praise. There is compassion in his pages, but never indignation. Sobriety, rather than excitement, marks his general approach. He sympathizes with the victims of the press, the suffering of the poor, but he can also describe with insight the pressures weighing upon those who carried the burdens of public office. The breadth of his sympathies and his restraint in dealing with some of the more controversial aspects of the period make his book attractive and distinctive.

Mr Emsley believes the threat of domestic revolution in Britain to have been greatly exaggerated, and

not only by many of those who lived through the turbulent years of war, and economic recession, but by many historians since. There is nothing new of course, in this viewpoint, but it is timely to state it. The extreme radicals are not ignored, but the majority of reformers are shown to have been men of reason, not violence, sometimes naive and occasionally confused, almost always well meaning, and rarely realistic. The importance of distress, food shortages, and the scale of wartime taxation in provoking outbreaks of disorder is fully brought home. If the fears of the governing classes were excessive they were according to Mr Emsley, understandable. He cultivates his discussion with good detail: he uses popular songs to give point to the main thrust of his arguments, and he also uses quotations from contemporary writers to provide individual cases which add colour and personality to his discussion of such things as the unpopularity of crimping houses, the conduct of officers in charge of the press gang, the difficulties of army recruitment, the ways in which the war disrupted some trades and stimulated others. He shows that if some suffered grievously through the war others benefited. He does not, however, find that their employment depended upon it. Nor does Mr Emsley oversimplify the popular response to the war. He deals well with both the swing of opinion to the patriotic and loyalist cause, and the division of opinion which the success and strains of war caused among the governing and property classes.

Like other recent writers he is critical of the Talents. One of the most valuable aspects of Mr Emsley's work is his coverage of military and naval recruitment and administration. He is conscious of

the logistics of war, and he brings out, in a relatively brief compass, the difficulties the politicians faced in raising an army equipped both for home defence and service abroad. He shows the severe impact of the casualty rate, in proportion to the numbers engaged, and emphasizes the unromantic reality of war for those involved in fighting it. He also deals well with the impact of the war on public attitudes.

There are times when Mr Emsley errs on the side of caution, however. He is fully acquainted with the work of E. P. Thompson and his critics, but in his anxiety to be fair to conflicting interpretations he is sometimes inconclusive. An instance of this is his treatment of the Luddites. He quotes Mr Thompson to the effect that "sheer Insecurity-fury has rarely been more vividly expressed in English history than in the summer of 1812, yet he doubts whether Luddism posed a real revolutionary threat, stating that revolutions require more than a lower-class rising. He praises the Government for not losing its nerve, though he feels that the Home Secretary was indecisive. At this point the reader is left in doubt as to whether Luddism posed a real revolutionary threat, stating that revolutions require more than a lower-class rising. He praises the Government for not losing its nerve, though he feels that the Home Secretary was indecisive. 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BOOKS

To each his own

J. H. C. Davi

*J. C. H. Davies is senior lecturer
in geology at Reading University.*

as J. C. H. Davies is senior lecturer in
'sbiology at Reading University.'

Overseas continued

CANADA
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EDUCATION OF THE
HANDICAPPED
EDUCATION OF THE
HANDICAPPED

Positions open:
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR and
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR in
Education of the Handicapped
Candidates should have
postgraduate and research
training in this area, PhD com-
pleted. University teaching and
administrative experience as well as
knowledge of the field.

These are tenure positions.
Major responsibility will
be in implementation of the
University's policy on the
education of the handicapped
as well as other academic
duties. Salary and conditions
will be commensurate with
experience.

The programme will be con-
siderable. The successful
candidate will be expected to
contribute to the University's
teaching and research in
this area.

Applications should be sent to:
The Registrar, University of
Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada T6T 6H6.

UNITED STATES
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Application invited for the
position of Assistant Professor
of Education in the Department
of Education, University of
Denver, Denver, Colorado.
Candidates should have a
PhD and be qualified for
teaching and research in
the field of education.

These are tenure positions.
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Applications should be sent to:
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USA 80202.

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The way ahead for modern languages

While hoping that Ken Burghin's article on the British attitude in foreign languages (*THE*, March 27) is intended to be ironic, and that every point he makes should be read as intended to say the opposite of what it appears to mean, I cannot resist a pang or two of doubt: he may just possibly mean what he says, fatuous though most of it is, so that perhaps a word or two of refutation might not come amiss.

My first anxiety is about the purpose of the article. Is it to be a Burghin trying to prove that we should simply give up the struggle where languages are concerned? The article reads at times like a response to someone else's claim that to arms on the subject of language teaching, where we are going to be guliminated into linguistic competence "originally meant? I'd like to know, because I'd like to support it.

And there is a case to be made out. Unfortunately we have to deal with half-baked notions like the "idea that the educational system is going to be guliminated into linguistic competence" originally meant? I'd like to know, because I'd like to support it.

Mr Burghin makes out a case against the audio-visual language teaching revolution. He is in a way, but the revolution was important, not for what it achieved, but for the fact that it was there at all. It is over now. But it has achieved two great objectives: it has made teachers think about what they are doing, and how to do it better, in a way never before attempted, and it has satisfied a great many people regarding the view—also stated by Mr Burghin, and again I agree with him—that there is no easy way to learn a language properly.

Does art really need history?

In 1963, when I first started teaching art history, it, together with complementary studies, had just been introduced as a compulsory 15 per cent of the new Diploma in Art and Design. These considerations of controversy about how to teach what is essentially an academic subject to students primarily concerned with a practical training, and I was both intrigued and exasperated by the prejudices which were often directed about academic as opposed to practical pursuits.

Now, after 16 years of trial and error, it is proposed to make the quantity of art history, and related subjects more flexible, but some art schools fear that the CNA (the Council for National Academic Awards) will not award degrees in art and design courses which do not contain a sufficient amount of what is called academic content. Why should this be? Art historians need no practical art training to gain an equivalent grasp of the history of art or design. What is it which is thought to be intrinsically more valuable about a theoretical subject as opposed to a practical one?

It is said that the artist/designer needs a basic knowledge of the art of the past in order to do his own work in that context, especially if he is going to teach others: the ability to organize his thoughts and write them down clearly will necessarily lead to a more articulate approach to his practical work. This may well be true; most great artists of the past, with one or two notable exceptions, have been able to think and write clearly about their ideas. But then, could it not equally well be argued that the art historian needs a basic knowledge of the practical and insight if he were to teach

with the falling numbers in schools, a real opportunity presents itself to organize language teaching on a small-group basis, living as we do in this to find ways of teaching other things to the same children in large groups, so that on average we maintain an acceptable pupil-teacher ratio.

Within the content of language classes we must make a balance between endless oral structure-drills and the older style of translation-type exercises. And we must let English back into foreign language classes; it has a place there, and it must be allowed in realistic it.

Statistics in support of arguments, always get me reeling for my gun, and Mr Burghin's needless use of percentages of second language learners studying English is the most extreme example of the omiscness of his whole article.

The point Mr Burghin should have made, and I think he has, is that there are a few people who are not good enough, in his own estimation, to be able to learn a foreign language. Even in that country, my own average command of French is often admired. When a Briton addresses foreign nationals in their language, he takes them on equal terms, or even, if he is good enough, to his own advantage. Is it possible that our Prime Minister's notable failure to make any real impression on European leaders has something to do with the fact that she is at a psychological disadvantage, being unable to speak one of their languages, etc. actually speaks her own rather less well than some of them?

Which leads us to the point—also made by Mr Burghin, but not understood by him in its full significance—about the value of learning a language in a second language, because, if you are taught properly, you learn so much more about your native language, and about language in general, in the process.

Linguistics is especially becoming a "hot" subject. In spite of the emphasis of the educationalists on the fact that it is a very important subject, it is changing our thinking about language, and about language in general, in the process. Linguistics is especially becoming a "hot" subject. In spite of the emphasis of the educationalists on the fact that it is a very important subject, it is changing our thinking about language, and about language in general, in the process.

gives us an excuse for not teaching kids how to use languages. As a teacher of foreign languages in higher education, specializing in teaching Spanish from scratch, I am weary of having to start explaining to 18-year-olds how the articulation of the sentence works. I don't care what name you use to refer to a verb, but you've got to call it something, or you can't talk about it at all!

But, finally, to look to the future, as modern language degree courses fatter, as the numbers of A level modern languages candidates declines, as the DES, late in the day as usual, but better late than never, starts proposing that even polytechnics with an previous experience in language and secretarial studies courses should consider converting their degree courses to programmes of study for bi-lingual secretaries, relying on those for slighted few who have been doing precisely that kind of work for years to come, or the development of the first developments, what hope can we hold out against the depressing blandness of Mr Burghin's upside down Micawberism?

I suggest we must continue to encourage young people to study a foreign language alongside other subjects, as a continuing process through their educational careers, so that whether they eventually become engineers or scientists, lawyers or doctors, accountants or secretaries, they have some knowledge of at least one other of the world's most-spoken languages to make one of them.

Mr Burghin, of course, makes no reference to any of this. He is clearly unaware of the potential being uncovered by those of us still concerned to enable the British to be a little less insular, not to say xenophobic, in the matter of language education.

One change we are making in our approach is very important: we are a little less interested now than heretofore in turning out "linguists". The idea that studying a modern language by itself constitutes a valuable educational experience, which is a very important educational value in learning a language, because, if you are taught properly, you learn so much more about your native language, and about language in general, in the process.

Linguistics is especially becoming a "hot" subject. In spite of the emphasis of the educationalists on the fact that it is a very important subject, it is changing our thinking about language, and about language in general, in the process.

Hugh Probyn

The author is head of the school of language and humanities in Preston Polytechnic.

Don's diary

Teaching

I am teaching three courses this semester, the usual haul for an assistant professor at my university. One is a basic course in public speaking, the second an upper level undergraduate course in persuasion, and the third a graduate course in rhetorical history and theory.

The public speaking students are giving persuasive speeches this week, or at least that is their assignment. A distressing number seem unable to develop a coherent, organized, well supported argument. I am identifying this round of speech, and going over the speech with each student. With the evidence of their crimes before us, it is easier to convince students that their public speaking has room for betterment.

I hold back the midterm examinations to the persuasion class Monday. The scores ranged from 45 per cent to 94 per cent. I remind those students who did poorly that I am available outside of class for consultation on future assignments. Some will take me up on the offer, but others are quite willing to accept low grades rather than to do so. I am not sure why.

Wednesday includes reports from the assigned group projects. The students are to develop and implement persuasive campaigns. One group is attempting to persuade students to sign up for vaccination, another to work on behalf of John Anderson (a candidate for the Republican Party presidential nomination), and a third is working to convince the university to enlarge the campus recreation building. The groups seem off to a good start.

The rhetoric course is really too large to teach. I have had to postpone due to lack of space. The course is a two-semester course, and I have had to postpone due to lack of space. The course is a two-semester course, and I have had to postpone due to lack of space.

Port of the problem is financial. We support PhD students for two years. Three semesters and a summer are spent on course work. The fourth semester and second summer are given over to qualifying examinations and a start on the dissertation. Thereafter must students leave to secure employment (and in our satisfaction, they have). The fourth semester and second summer are given over to qualifying examinations and a start on the dissertation. Thereafter must students leave to secure employment (and in our satisfaction, they have).

The practical side of life has so much to offer the academic, and vice versa. If only each side could treat the other as an equal, rather than as a subordinate. This is especially true in fields like art and design, where there should be so much common ground to start with.

My proposal would reinstate the requirement. The proposal, certainly to be defeated, is viewed with suspicion by many of my colleagues, who consider a second language an unnecessary hurdle on the path to the PhD.

The uneasy relationship between art and history is also reflected in the society at large in another way. In our exclusively unreflective attitude to the past, in the first place, we reject the experience of previous generations on the grounds that knowledge and information are developing so fast that the past rapidly becomes irrelevant. This is then compounded by the academic's expression in an almost obsessive conservatism and conservatism of the past on the one hand and in the introduction of 1940s clothes or 1950s pop music on the other.

Similarly, in many art schools today, necessarily innovative art students are not expected to allow their work to develop from experience but to study traditional methods in any depth, but are rather taught to cultivate originality, and to become immediately members of the avant garde. When we cannot come together to learn from one another's experience in whatever field it may be then surely there must be something wrong.

Mary Acton

Departmental and university affairs

The bi-weekly faculty meeting falls on Wednesday. We are a proposal to change the day of the course required of all PhD students. After extended discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

I have lost count of the occasions on which my colleagues have used the word "parade" in connection with the attack on the university. The word is used in a number of ways, but it is always used in a derogatory sense.

The Thursday meeting again had to secure consensus. Several proposals are made, and we are in an inconclusive state. The chairman, after a long time, announces that the meeting is adjourned. The meeting is adjourned.

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Reflection

It is interesting that the word "reflection" is used in a number of ways, but it is always used in a derogatory sense.

Randall Byrnes

The author is assistant professor of speech communication at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dangers to academic freedom

Sir—Kenneth Minogue (*THE*, March 7) pinpoints the danger to university independence that can come from those who confuse independence with "privilege". The danger is that those who are not aware of the dangers of academic freedom will be led to a new kind of academic freedom, one in which my study-group understood these words.

Our report sought to show that in several fields of study Marxist ideology is prohibited by law: there are other countries where criticism of Marxism is visited with severe penalties. Such countries do not know academic freedom in the sense in which my study-group understood these words.

Most of these discussions take place in a cramped office, the capitol of professors to my building, plan one day to find the architect responsible and stop them from building a new building for the faculty. The danger is that those who are not aware of the dangers of academic freedom will be led to a new kind of academic freedom, one in which my study-group understood these words.

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higher education) had a right to know of such a dangerous situation. Griffiths is worried that knowledge of perfectly legal, though not always admirable, activities, will damage job prospects. He also, he writes, would like "to abolish all ranks of professors, readers, senior lecturers". He may, therefore, have mixed feelings if I tell him that, since 1977, at least one of those mentioned has reached the hated pinnacle of professorial power.

Thirdly, there is another side to the coin of academic freedom. The ISC group was well aware that "contentious" non-Marxist (or anti-Marxist) beliefs have been barriers to appointment or promotion. The statement "X is an enemy of the people" has, I can assure you, been explicitly and successfully used in this way. Professor Griffiths would not want us to "name" the person on the appointment in regard to which this crude play was successful: nor for it is equally confidential: nor the members of the ISC group wish to list the cases where subtle gobs of "disinformation" from the Left have been accepted—especially by a Establishment "liberal" figure who felt guilty about their privileged youth.

Happily—and not least in the social sciences—there are many signs that Left-wing hubris is now being replaced by a more realistic view of the world. The ISC group, however much it may regret its past, cannot make its large purges more congenial. For, since the article was on the theme of academic freedom, you readers may want to be reminded that the ISC's conception of academic freedom and democracy, in the words of its spokesmen, derives from explicit opposition to the large structure of our society as it is today.

Yours sincerely, JULIUS GOULD, 381 Derby Road, Nottingham.

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Good and bad sociology

Sir—Much as I enjoyed Digby Anderson's brilliant article on the way with equating good research with quantitative sociology, and bad research with qualitative sociology. Despite the weight of his criticism of Marxist media studies, "qualitative sociology" covers a great deal more than that. For example, conversational analysis or ethnography are two areas where rigorous research is being produced. It may make sense to use the term quantitative sociology for work based on numerical evidence, but qualitative sociology is a catchall title for several different methods and styles of work, some rigorous and others equally deserving the scorn of Anderson's critique.

The most important common feature of the qualitative ecologies is that they are unpopular with policymakers. Survey research deals in hard numbers: it is therefore perceived as "scientific" and, as a result, is more likely to be funded. Other methods of research are less acceptable, not just because they are sometimes abused, but because they are not as recognizable as "science" according to positivist equities. As a result, there is a tendency to believe that qualitative ecologies, the SSC Sociology and Sociolinguistics Committee does not have a record of discrimination against "softer" methods.

It would be a pity if the issue of funding and utility of research findings blurred the problem of what constitutes "sociological research". Sociology finds itself in a difficult position—and Anderson is right that we are in some difficulty—because we are seen as a discipline with no training at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. When the discipline became established in the late 1960s and early 1970s, its rapid expansion sucked in many people without higher degrees (or whose postgraduate experience was purely in the area of library based exercises) or without successfully completing an apprenticeship as a research assistant.

This lack of training, combined with the Messianic fervour of a generation recruited to the highest of the social sciences, has led to a poor foundation for the new British sociology. Our inheritance is not just a problem of too much theory, or too much Marxism, or too much media sociology: it is also a fundamental lack of technical skills in the use of what we practice, and an unwillingness to exercise the tough, extensive and effective criticism which Anderson advocates.

Yours faithfully, GEOFF PAYNE, Dean of Faculty of Social Science, Plymouth Polytechnic.

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Sir—What an enriching and thrilling experience to read Digby C. Anderson's brilliant article on the current malaise of media sociology. We all know what supreme intellectual courage is called for to say unpopular things these days. Men of his calibre are surely hard to find.

How good it was to see him draw inspiration from some of our more profound social theorists! In his argument for tougher policing to keep irresponsible radicals in line one could sense the towering presence of Professor Julius Gould, who has done much to advance the cause of academic freedom.

Mr Anderson's passionate argument for making sociology into a business is relevant to the current debate on the re-evaluation of the profound policy being pioneered by Dr Rhodes Boyson at the DES. Surely, Mr. Anderson's argument would demand that these academic infiltrators be expelled from the British Sociological Association and that the SSC should refuse in future to give grants to these ideologically infected wasters. If only Mr Anderson had provided us with some more names, there would right-minded academics could have taken appropriate action in our own institutions.

Yours faithfully, DR PHILIP SCHLESINGER, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Thames Polytechnic.

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